The MAC Flyer

JULY 1977

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The MAC Flyer

MILITARY AIRLIFT COMMAND

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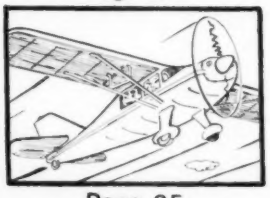

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Flyer Call

Beginning next month THE MAC FLYER will have a new supervising editor, Lieutenant Colonel Orlen "Bud" Brownfield, associate editor for the past two years. The present editor signs off with this issue after four years at the helm (minus several months for extensive body repair) and the kind of education that only a headquarters tour can offer.

Four years can translate into a great deal of almost anything. For magazine editors, a tour can most accurately be chronicled in terms of the hundreds of hours spent writing, editing, rewriting, and so on; plus frequent visits to the dictionary, verbal fights with the printer and brows deeply furrowed by serious efforts to produce what, prayerfully, will be a humorous episode of C.R. Terror.

The presumed glamor of an editor's job (a mammoth presumption at best) is fleeting. Reality has a way of clearing away such thoughts, just as it can bring into focus job satisfaction to those who have found their niche. Some of us have been fortunate enough to experience such satisfaction.

There *are* journalists who believe that writers should never indulge themselves with printed farewells. This well-founded rule is being tread upon lightly here, but undiluted objectivity and editorial restraint is difficult to achieve once pen is in hand and departure time approaches; and when restraint falters, nostalgia often takes the lead.

Editors come and go, but the better publications seem to reflect little of this. And this is as it should be. JWR

The Winners: 1977 MAC Flying Safety Writing Contest

A SAC tanker pilot, an Air National Guard officer, and an Air Weather Service chief master sergeant have taken the top three spots in the 1977 MAC Flying Safety Writing Contest.

Top story of the year is "A Case of Survival," by Capt Michael E. Humphreys of the 9th Air Refueling Squadron, Beale AFB, California. Captain Humphreys, a former Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Service helicopter pilot, weaves a thought-provoking tale centering around the personalities and attitudes of two crewmen who find themselves in a survival situation following the crash of their helicopter. Captain Humphreys was an honorable mention winner in last year's contest.

Second place went to Maj Patrick S. Boab, 133d Tactical Airlift Wing (ANG), Minneapolis-St Paul IAP, Minnesota, for "Did You Hear About Joe?" In this philosophical article, Major Boab questions whether the "worst" pilots actually are more likely to become involved in accidents than the "sharp" ones. Major Boab won third place in last year's contest.

CMSgt George M. Horn of Headquarters, Air Weather Service, Scott AFB, placed third with "How To Get Lost in Your Own Backyard." Chief Master Sergeant Horn, who has a private pilot's license, gave a first person account of problems encountered in a Cessna 182 while attempting a short flight from a private airstrip to a nearby airport. The experience reinforces the reasons behind aero club rules and regulations.

The 1977 contest attracted more entries than any in recent years. And, for the first time in the memory of any of the editors, articles were entered by women.

Honorable mention winners are: "Overwater Gulf" by Capt Terrence J. Brady, 314th Tactical Airlift Wing, Little Rock AFB, Arkansas; "The Last Medevac" by 1st Lt Douglas J. Miller, 71st Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron, Elmendorf AFB, Alaska; "Thin Margin for Error" by 1st Lt Jerry C. Anderson, Detachment 4, 41st Rescue and Weather Reconnaissance Wing, Hill AFB, Utah; and "Fools Rush In" by Flt Lt David E. Ozanne, 1551st Flying Training Squadron, Kirtland AFB, New Mexico.

Also receiving honorable mention are "Fail-Safe" by Capt Terry R. Lowe, 63rd Military Airlift Wing, Norton AFB, California; "The MAC Average" by Capt Marcus L. Sherrill, Air Force Global Weather Central, Offutt AFB, Nebraska; "The Unsafe Condition" by SSgt William R. Madden, 702d Millitary Airlift Squadron (Associate), McGuire AFB, New Jersey; "A Matter of Degrees" by Maj J. Darrell Lindsey, 155th Tactical Airlift Squadron (ANG), Memphis IAP, Tennessee; and "Mummph's Memoirs" by Lt Col Chuck Hines, 62d Transportation Squadron, McChord AFB, Washington.

The winning article appears in this month's magazine. Other winners will be published in subsequent issues.

If MAC regs have ever given you the wrong kind of gas, you'll easily recognize the symptoms in this true story of an aeronautical nightmare.

Judgment Call

by Capt Bruce L. Gumble
Associate Editor

The mission of MAC will be based on the concept that safety comes first.
—MAC Manual 55-1, 12 Sep 68

I didn't care for the major's expression as he glared at me across the ACP counter. He'd obviously had a rough night already, and I wasn't making it any easier.

"Look, Captain, I'm tired of going around and around with you. Now, do you take the airplane or do we get your DO on the line for a little conference?"

I noticed for about the twelfth time that he had a star on his wings, and I didn't. I mentally dug in my heels and tried to get some authority into my voice.

"Sir, all I'm asking for is a little extra gas. I know it's not specifically spelled out in the regs, but—"

"You're damn right it's not in the regs!" There was plenty of authority in *his* voice, but not much patience. "That airplane has flight plan fuel load, and that's all you need." He started to say something else I didn't want to hear, but the phone interrupted him. I waited; he listened, giving an occasional grunt of acknowledgement. Finally, he hung up and pushed the brief/debrief form toward me.

"Looks like we've both been wasting our time," he informed me sourly. "The airplane's broken. You're going back into crew rest." I signed the form, trying not to look relieved, and headed out to join in the bag drag.

It was to have been just a routine flight back across the Atlantic to Dover, but two minor differences had turned it into something else. The first was the fuel load. In those days, fuel conservation wasn't being stressed, and it was routine to have 10,000 pounds of unidentified extra fuel aboard; but this particular 141 was limited in gross weight because of trunion bearing slippage, and it had exactly what the computer flight plan called for.

The second difference was the weather. It was midsummer; the east coast had been under a dome of high pressure for several days. We were due to arrive at Dover near sunrise; I'd been flying in and out of there long enough to know that we could expect fog. Lots of the stuff, all along the coast and a good distance inland. I'd seen mornings when everything from Maine to the Carolinas was socked in tight. The forecast for Dover was 300 feet and a mile; McGuire wasn't much better, and I had my doubts about our alternate, Griffiss. Everything was legal according to the book, but I knew how easily it could turn into a barrel of worms. Extra fuel looked like the answer, but I'd have to ask for it.

I asked—and that's when the fight started. Because of the gross weight limitation, putting on the extra gas meant bumping a pallet, and the aerial port was jammed with cargo for the States. I didn't have 55-1 to fall back on, because the situation wasn't covered. All I had was my nebulous authority as a very junior aircraft commander and a

strong feeling that we were going to need that extra fuel. All in all, it had been a very ugly situation, and I was glad it had been taken out of my hands.

Final responsibility for the safe conduct of the mission rests with the aircraft commander....

—MM 55-1A, 14 Jun 66

As it turned out, the respite was only temporary. Twenty-four hours later we were alerted for the same airplane, same mission, same circumstances. I approached the ACP counter reluctantly, not wanting to start the battle again—and found a different controller on duty.

"Extra gas? Sure, no problem. We'll just bump a pallet." For a minute I had the same feeling that you get when you lift what looks like a really heavy object and find out that it's light as a feather. Then the feeling turned to ordinary gratitude, and I finished flight planning and went out to the airplane. We made our 0200 local departure with plenty to spare.

Nothing went wrong until just after takeoff, when we found that the autopilot was DNIF. The copilot (we only had one on this trip) mentioned something about getting a little stick time. I told him he could have all eight hours if he wanted it. He didn't.

Then, during the climb, Center amended our altitude from FL 350 to FL 240. A temporary restriction, they said, due to traffic.

Two hours later, we were still at 240. I was beginning to think about Lajes, but the extra fuel gave us a healthy margin. We checked the Lajes weather anyway. It was typical: winds blowing sideways at 55 knots. So much for Lajes. We'd have to turn around unless the climb clearance came through pretty soon.

It did, just about the time I finished my flight lunch. We got to 350 to find 30 extra knots of headwind waiting for us. We included some caustic remarks in the AIREP, slowed down to .74 Mach, and put in a request for FL 390.

We were half an hour past ETP and still at FL 350 when the navigator announced that the thin margin of daylight between our fuel plots and the max fuel line seemed to be holding. The good news was followed immediately by some bad news: a CADC 2 INOP annunciator light. The copilot's instruments hiccuped once and died. He tried flying cross-cockpit for awhile, then decided that I needed the stick time more than he did.

By this time, I was feeling a little rocky. Hand-flying the airplane with no relief didn't help; neither did the amended forecast of 200-1/2 for Dover. With part of the flight instruments out, we were now limited to 300-3/4. We talked to 21st, refiled for McGuire, and pressed on. I had a large, cold lump in my stomach that was getting heavier as time went by.

The aircraft commander will not attempt an approach to an airfield when weather conditions are questionable. . . .

—MM 55-1, 12 Sep 68

New York Center confirmed that Dover was indeed below minimums — anybody's minimums. It was zero-zero. So were JFK, Otis, Philadelphia, Andrews, and everyplace else we could think of—except McGuire.

"MAC 60135, McGuire is reporting an estimated ceiling of three hundred feet, visibility one mile in fog."

Estimated ceiling? That didn't sound too great. We checked the weather at Griffiss again; it was shaky, but legal.

We conferred with 21st again. Go to McGuire, they said. After all, it's above minimums. I took another look at the fuel chart, sighed, and requested descent clearance. The lump in my stomach was bigger now, and I was starting to sweat.

The copilot's interphone quit as the clearance was coming through. It was one of the long ones, with three low-altitude airways, two intermediate altitudes, and an intersection for a clearance limit. I managed to get it after the second repeat in spite of the controller's New York Center rapid-fire style delivery. The copilot was busily swapping headsets and fiddling with his interphone switches. Nothing worked. He finally gave up and plugged into the jump seat cord, reaching over to turn the wafer switch from interphone to VHF-2 every time Center called.

That worked all right for awhile, but when the communications got heavy and we had checklists to run, he just couldn't keep up. I finally took over the radios and told him to stay on interphone. I was now flying a C-141 solo, with no autopilot and nobody else to hand it to if I got vertigo or conked out.

My stomach was really knotted now. I was gritting my teeth against the pain and sweating like a pig. I felt thoroughly ashamed; I knew I was scared, but didn't think I was *that* scared. We went into the murk at 3,000 feet and I managed to forget it for awhile as things got busy.

The decision to land or execute a

missed approach will be made at or before reaching authorized minimums. . . .

—MM 55-1, 12 Sep 68

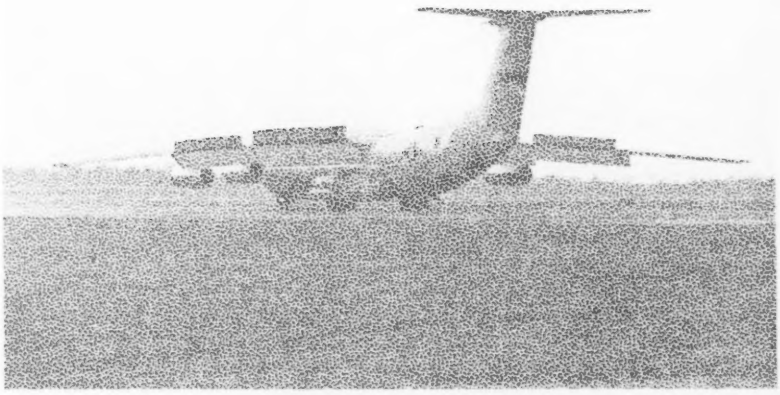
"Decision height," the copilot called. He knew it was the wrong call, and so did I; he should have said, "Go around." But we were both hoping for a sight of the runway; the ILS was good and stable, and even on one set of gauges, we might be able to get it on the ground. I kept it going down . . . 250 feet . . . 200 feet . . . 150 feet . . . and still nothing but murk. I ran out of nerve and started the go-around, cursing the "estimated" ceiling. For a second, the copilot saw the light from the strobes directly beneath us as we started the climb, but that was all. We called approach control and asked for clearance to Griffiss. The navigator figured we had enough gas to make it, if we didn't mind using our holding fuel.

We were a few minutes on the way when Center called with the news that Griffiss was now down to a quarter mile and asked for our intentions. I didn't have any intentions at the moment; I just wanted to curl up in a ball and not have to fly that damn airplane anymore. We milled around for awhile dodging airliners while Center checked the weather at a half dozen places. The result just confirmed what we already knew: there wasn't anyplace we could get to that was above minimums.

If . . . the aircraft commander believes that an emergency exists, or will be created, he may take any action he deems necessary to insure safety of flight . .

—MM 55-1A, 14 Jun 66

We picked Dulles as being the best bet. It had plenty of runway and a CAT II ILS, and they were reporting an RVR of 2,000. For once, I didn't feel old-maidish about declaring an emergency.



There was enough fuel for another 11 minutes of flying.

We watched the gas dwindle as we headed southwest; you could almost feel the pumps sucking it out of the tanks. The controllers were very helpful; they cleared everybody out of the way and got us on final in minimum time. The ILS was the toughest, and best, I've ever flown; the touchdown was one of the greatest sensations of my life. I stopped the airplane straight ahead, set the brakes, and swapped seats to let the copilot taxi in; I didn't have enough strength left to hold the nosewheel steering steady. There was enough fuel left for another 11 minutes of flying.

Spoiled inflight meals can be deadly.

—MM 55-1, 1 Sep 65

I didn't leave the hospital until three days later. The customs guy had been nice enough to clear me at the airplane so the ambulance attendants could do their thing; still, it was a long time before I felt better. "Food poisoning is funny," the flight surgeon said. "It makes you feel like each cell of your body is dying individually." I had to agree. I also had to wonder who else had ordered the chicken snack that day; fortunately, no one else on the crew had.

The explanations to my squadron commander didn't take long, and nothing ever came of the whole incident. I forgot it for quite awhile. Then, years later, one of my simulator students brought it back to mind.

He'd had a pretty tough day, but he'd handled everything well. He was sitting in the briefing room, unwinding and talking to his flying partner.

"It's just too unrealistic," he complained. "In the first place, there's no way all those things would go wrong on one flight. And in the second place, anything you can run into is covered somewhere in the book. Why try to learn judgment when you never have a chance to use it?"

So I told him the story.

Capt Bennett and Crew

Capt Bennett, aircraft commander

1st Lt Stockstad, copilot

1st Lt Nemeyer, navigator

TSgt Burnette, engineer

Sgt Bordessa, loadmaster

Captain Bruce S. Bennett's 50 TAS crew, on rotation to Europe from Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, was alerted for a cargo flight from Frankfurt AB, Germany, to Decimomannu, Italy. His crew was 1st Lt Alan C. Stockstad, copilot; 1st Lt George F. Nemeyer, Jr., navigator; TSgt Charles A. Burnette, flight engineer, and Sgt Daniel A. Bordessa, loadmaster.

The C-130E had been airborne approximately one hour when a right-hand-AC-Bus-Off light illuminated. The *number four generator* was turned off and minutes later the generator failed with both voltage and frequency dropping to zero. Sergeant Burnette attempted to reset the generator, but his efforts failed and the engine was shut down.

Captain Bennett declared an emergency and requested immediate return to Frankfurt. About 15 minutes after turning back toward Rhein-Main, in IFR conditions, the *number three generator-out* light illuminated. Voltage and frequency were zero and the engineer was unable to reset it. Captain Bennett determined that the emergency warranted immediate landing, and Lieutenants Nemeyer and Stockstad checked for the nearest suitable landing field. A descent was requested and approved. During the descent *number two generator* failed and the ATM (air turbine motor) generator was activated. Passing 10,000 feet, the aircraft commander ordered the gear and flaps lowered. Sergeant Bordessa visually confirmed the landing configuration. Several minutes later, the *number one generator* failed and could not be reset. With all four generators inoperative, the aircrew contacted Nancy Approach Control and requested vectors to a PAR approach. The weather was not good: a 500-foot ceiling and one mile visibility.

Just before turning final, the *ATM generator* failed and the aircraft's only remaining power source was the battery! Nancy provided vectors to set up the approach. The pilot intercepted the glide slope and began the descent to decision height. But before reaching decision height, battery power failed and all electrical equipment was lost. Descent was continued for another 100 feet, and at 300 feet the Herk broke out of the clouds. The crew spotted the runway approximately a half mile ahead. Captain Bennett visually completed the three-engine approach and landed.

For their skill, knowledge, and crew coordination during a very critical in-flight emergency, each aircrew member was awarded the MAC Distinguished Individual Safety Award. THE MAC FLYER is pleased to add a well-deserved Good Show.

Omissions and errors are magnified when a search for survivors turns into

A Case of Survival

By Capt Michael Humphreys
9th Air Refueling Squadron (SAC)
Beale AFB, California

Captain Warren Rhoades Doering III was a "mover," a "man of action," a "procurer of good deals." But he was, by his own admission, out of his element at this point—lying on a bough bed in the forest, thinking the situation over. He was incredibly thirsty and cold. Cold. Cold. Cold. Winn was in the tiny shelter with him, shivering.

"Pappy" Blackburn and John Heitman, the two PJ's, were somewhere beyond the curtain of snow flurries, trying to scrounge something edible. Paul Taggert, the flight engineer, scratched away with

First Place Winner, 1977 MAC Flying Safety Writing Contest

the flexible wire saw from Pappy's personal survival kit, attempting to cut enough wood from a fallen tree to feed their meager fire.

And Joubert? Where was he? Joubert was no more. Doering lay back and closed his eyes. Doering was still floating in the twilight world of shock and disbelief at what was happening to him.

Doering slowly dug his fingers, clad only in a pair of thin flight gloves, down between the fir and spruce branches from which his bed—was it to become his bier?—was constructed. How did we wind up here? The review of events was painful—like dragging a sharp instrument across an ugly, swollen wound. But the cold and the shock numbed the pain.

Somewhere he had made a mistake that had landed his copilot, Winn, and the rest of his crew in this mess. And he had cost the Air Force an HH-53C, the remains of which now rested at the bottom of a gully somewhere on his left. Or was it his right? He couldn't remember.

To Doering, flying had not been an end in itself, but only a means to an end. It was the best way he knew for getting "good deals." It wasn't that he didn't enjoy flying, but it seemed he could come by more good deals that way. To him, life was searching for the next good deal.

When the SAR (search and rescue) mission had first come down and was passed to scheduling, Doering had begun his move. He had easily maneuvered himself on as AC. When push came to shove, Doering had elbows as sharp as anyone's. It wasn't long before he had formed the crew and the ops officer had approved it. For copilot, he had tagged a young second lieutenant, Terry Winn, fresh from his local checkout. Paul Taggert, the flight engineer, was an experienced "old head." Two of the PJ's, Heitman and Joubert, were young troops but had a good handle on the business. The third PJ, SMSgt "Pappy" Blackburn, from headquarters, had been visiting the wing to get some flying time and requested to go on the mission. Blackburn had quite a reputation—numerous pickups in North Vietnam—and really knew his stuff. Word was that he would have been a chief master sergeant except for a couple of bar fights in Okinawa with some loudmouthed ground-pounders who wanted to know what PJ's were made of—and found out.

Pappy had eyed Doering suspiciously at the outset of this mission, and Doering admitted to himself that mission planning had been less than optimum. When the rumor started that the launch would be delayed to allow an IP, who was on leave, to accompany the crew, Doering went into high gear and got approval from the ops officer to take off. And as a result, he had left a few things undone. For instance, he and Winn had only the minimum equipment required for operating in a freezing environment: summer boots and lightweight flying jacket, long underwear, but summer flying gloves. Taggert had little more. The PJ's, of course, had brought their usual bags of gear.

The haste with which they had departed on the search had obviously bothered Pappy. But what the heck, they had to find the survivor quickly. The forecast called for two days of clear weather before another front, which would bring several days of snow, moved in. And there was also the distasteful possibility that the flight would be ordered to return so the IP could take over as AC.

The downed civilian aircraft was reported missing somewhere on a leg that ran between three VOR's. The Jolly Green flew a route search along the assumed route of flight but drew a blank. Doering decided to fly a second possible route in reverse, back to the civilian airport. But he had departed the civilian field in a hurry and had not told them where he was going to RON, when he would return, or how long he would be involved in the seach. And since he had not filed a flight plan prior to departing from the uncontrolled field, no one knew where to search for the downed helicopter.

An hour outbound from the third VOR on a direct line home, one of the PJ's thought he saw something and Doering doubled back to take a second look. Yes, there was definitely something there, but they couldn't be sure what. Bits of rag streaming from a tree top, a lopped off pine, a glint of something. They needed a closer look. And so down they went. Doering planned an approach without an area reconnaissance—just a quick hover and look-see. No need for a power check; he knew he had plenty. He chose to slip into the only clear area around. Blackburn warned him about the snow, but Doering figured he could hack it. He had qualified in the H-53 in Utah during the win-

ter and had seen plenty of it.

The area was large enough to accommodate an H-53, but it was surrounded by tall pine, fir, and spruce trees. Doering made a careful approach and began a slow, vertical descent.

The whiteout caught him by surprise. One second a blue sky above him; the next, everything white. He might as well have been flying a simulator. One instant the trees in front of him were in view; the next, he was lost inside a white world of billions of snow crystals.

For an instant, Doering froze, unable to comprehend that he and his aircraft had been swallowed up. Then he pulled in pitch with a vengeance. Winn watched the torque shoot well above the 100 percent red line. The helicopter's upward movement halted abruptly as the tail sliced into a large pine tree. Doering heard the sickening sound of rotor blades cleaving trees, the scream of engines as the giant thing tore itself apart, and the massive thud as the main fuselage smacked into the suffocating powder. The grinding and tearing continued as the huge helicopter slid down the steep incline, was disemboweled by jagged shafts of broken spruce and fir, and finally impaled itself upon a stand of fractured aspen.

The aircraft came to rest upside down and for a moment Doering hung in his straps. Then he released himself and fell down on what had once been an instrument panel, but was now a tangle of twisted metal, wire, and pine tree splinters. Glancing back into the cabin, he was surprised to see it half filled with snow. His initial fear had been the threat of fire. But not any longer. Not even JP-4 can burn under three feet of powdered snow. Doering looked up at Winn and, seeing him struggling to get free, gave him a hand; together they made their way out of what had been the front of the cockpit.

Doering was in pain as he thought of the last moments of the catastrophe. The enormity of the situation overwhelmed him. Slowly, he opened his eyes and looked up at his crude shelter. A steady trickle of snow pellets drifted down through tears and snags in the orange parachute canopy. Outside, like some giant sentinel on guard, stood a huge pine, cloaked in snow and half hidden in the swirling mist of blowing powder. After we've been found or have died here, he thought, it will still be there standing guard, silently watching the birth, life, and death of the creation around it.

He realized with a bitter irony that he knew very little about survival. His trip to Fairchild for survival training had simply been an unpleasant interruption in his Air Force schooling. He really hadn't tried to learn anything. He couldn't even remember the difference between old and new sea ice. Now, Doering felt helpless and desperately hoped that the rest of the crew remembered more about survival than he.

Pappy Blackburn had made several forays back to the helicopter on improvised snowshoes, looking for anything salvageable. He had used wire from the instrument panel to make small game trail snares, but so far they remained empty. But their immediate problem, Doering knew, was not food; it was water. Here they were, surrounded by tons of clean, white, pure, fresh powder snow— and nothing to melt it in. Taggert had scrounged a piece of metal torn from the aircraft and tried melting the snow in it. The result was a small amount of wretched tasting liquid tainted with oil and JP-4. Water—but hardly enough for five men.

Pappy warned them not to eat snow. "Don't do it," he said. "It'll lower your body's core temperature. And since we don't have any food to eat, there's no fuel for the body to burn and raise your temperature. If your core temperature gets too low, you'll die. Simple as that."

But Doering didn't know how long he could last. He had been thirsty now for days, it seemed. His feet and legs had long before gone numb and now felt like two wooden posts. But that feeling was slowly being replaced with a slight sensation of warmth and a gradual feeling of well-being. But he needed to have water. Crazy, he thought. All this snow—miles and miles of it and I can't get enough water to quench my thirst. He slipped out his hand and began groping for snow. He had to have something, anything to quench this terrible thirst! Slowly, he forced his numb fingers to grasp the powdery substance and brought it to his mouth. It tasted strangely gritty and cool. I wonder if this will kill me, he thought, as he reached for another handful.

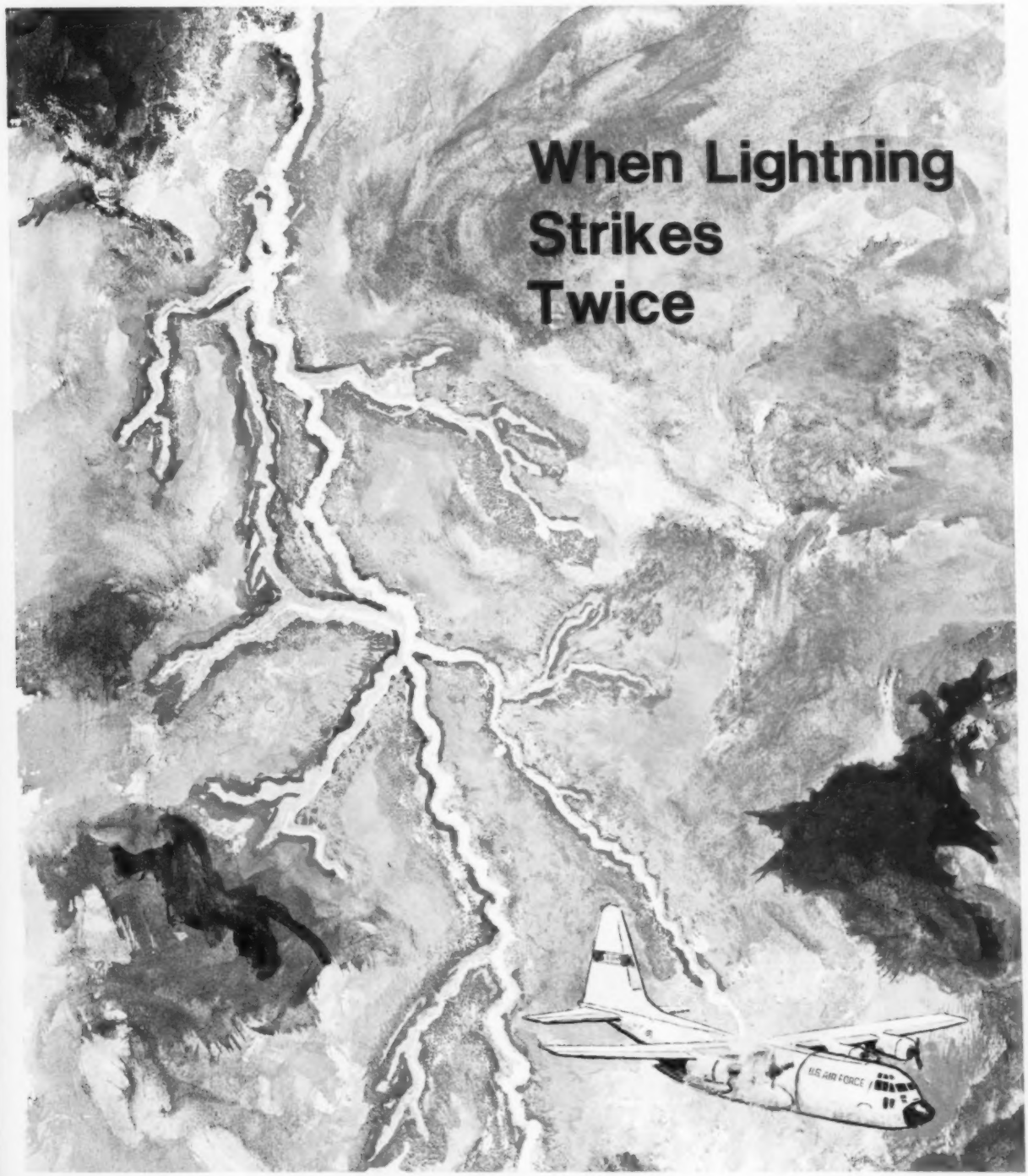
•

The man stopped digging, paused and looked up. He had struck another dry hole. The sun, struggling to remain above the horizon, was finally giving up and with a last barrage of yellow light slipped behind a faraway mountain. Already the evening star was visible. And down in the dusty canyons and behind distant buttes, purple shadows lengthened into dusk. No luck with water

(continued on page 22)

Slipping the surly bonds can be fun, but not while Mother Nature is putting on her magnificent electrostatic display.

When Lightning Strikes Twice



When flying during the thunderstorm season you expect to see lightning; it goes with the territory. And it's only one of the hazards associated with CB's. But lightning can present a hazard of its own, independent of the towering thunderstorms usually accompanying it. Two recent incidents, which occurred within 28 minutes and 100 miles of each

other, graphically illustrate the danger of lightning or static discharge even though no thunderstorm is present.

Herky Struck

The incident involved a C-130 on a local training mission near Huntington, West Virginia. Isolated thunderstorms had been forecast for the area, but none were present at the time of the incident; the only rain shower in the area was 22 miles away. The Hercules had just completed a descent to 4,000 feet and was in VMC when, suddenly, a bright flash and sparks lit up the right side of the fuselage and the aircraft shuddered. The crew turned their bird toward home and reported a lightning strike.

During a controllability check en route, the aircraft commander noted a difference of 35 knots between his and the copilot's airspeed indicators. After declaring an emergency and initiating a Conference Skyhook, he referred to his own airspeed indicator for the landing.

During the postflight inspection, two holes were found in the radome. Further inspection revealed a damaged right pitot head, a hole in the pitot line, and nine other holes in the skin of the aircraft. A ground observer, who witnessed the strike, said that the lightning bolt had travelled horizontally from a cloud to the aircraft.

Shook-up BUF

The second lightning strike occurred as a B-52 was flying a low-level route near Blackford, Virginia, some 100 miles to the northwest of the area where the C-130 had been struck. Again, isolated thunderstorms were forecast, but none were observed on either ground or airborne weather radar, although the aircraft was in and out of clouds, light turbulence, light rain showers, and light rime icing. The bomber was flying near the freezing level and at an airspeed of 250 knots.

Without any warning, a blinding flash illuminated the cockpit and a loud explosion shook the aircraft. The aircraft commander advised the crew of the lightning strike and terminated the low-level operation.

Except for an inoperative HF radio, no damage was detected en route to home base. But maintenance inspectors found the HF antenna coupler had been severely damaged by overvoltage; the explosion heard by the crew was probably the shattering of the glass portion of the coupler.

An investigation showed that there had been no thunderstorms in the area, but that weather conditions were conducive to static electricity buildup and discharge. A small burned area on the vertical stabilizer indicated the path of the static discharge which damaged the antenna coupler.

As these incidents demonstrate, avoiding thunderstorms isn't always enough to eliminate the possibility of lightning or static discharge. But there are measures you can take to cut the risk. Avoid extended periods of flight near the freezing level, don't fly through heavy precipitation if you can go around it, and reduce airspeed when flying in clouds or precipitation to lessen the buildup of static electricity on the aircraft.

Missing a Gear Door

Question: ***When is a MAC flight authorized to descend below minimums?***

"... six hundred broken, 1,000 overcast at your destination. Visibility will be two miles in light snow," the weatherman had said.

The forecast was fairly accurate. Light snow showers had begun the night before and after midnight had changed to a light freezing drizzle. At dawn, light snow again began falling, adding to the previous accumulation.

A weak cold front was moving toward the destination airfield. Ceilings were well below 1,000 feet and visibility was less than a mile. Not long after sunrise the intensity of the snow increased and moderate snow pelted the field.

Up to this point, the C-130 mission had been routine. Now into the third day of the mission, the crew listened to the weather briefing. Not exactly "field grade" weather, but the pilot flight examiner decided it was good enough to go. He put his AC-qualified copilot in the left seat and he took the right seat. The transport was approaching destination when the crew received the following weather update: ". . . indefinite ceilings at five hundred obscured, visibility three-eighths, I say again three-eighths, with a runway visual range two thousand six hundred feet in moderate snow . . ."

The aircraft descended and approach control routed the flight toward the ILS final. A PAR monitor was planned.

At the final approach fix, the controller transmitted, ". . . we have, ah, one quarter of a mile visibility and we have, ah, runway . . . RVR is, ah, twenty-two hundred—two, two." This transmission was acknowledged and the approach continued in spite of the fact that the weather was below authorized minimums. One minute prior to touchdown, the controller gave clearance to land and requested, ". . . report the runway in sight."

Although the snow had been removed from the runway (the braking action was reported 08 with loose snow), the overrun and some of the approach lights were still blanketed. By this time the field was foggy and heavy snow was falling; however, this fact was not transmitted to the crew.

At the middle marker, the PAR controller observed that the aircraft was slightly low. It was actually 20 to 30 feet low, but the crew was not informed. Just prior to decision height, the flight examiner (in the right seat) called "Approach lights in sight."

The flight examiner advised the left seater that the aircraft was low and to bring it up. But before any action was taken, it struck a strobe beacon 1,100 feet short of the runway. The impact ripped off the left main gear door and punctured a tire. Some 100 feet closer to the runway the right main gear contacted another strobe beacon

light and both tires on that side were punctured. A go-around was initiated and the flight examiner asked for vectors to "take another look at it."

The next weather sequence transmitted to the crew was, ". . . indefinite two hundred sky . . . visibility one-eighth of a mile, the RVR . . . two thousand and heavy snow and fog . . . "

Seconds later the flight informed approach control that the aircraft had touched down right at the threshold lights and appeared to be missing a landing gear door.

Due to the weather, the crew elected to climb to altitude and select an alternate airfield. After leveling off, the pilots swapped seats, the flight examiner taking the left seat.

Weather to the east and south looked bad so the aircrew decided to head back to their home station; however, due to fuel

Left side, looking aft.

Answer: ***When the runway environment is in sight and the aircraft is in a position to make a safe landing.***

requirements, they planned their route of flight so that it would take them near another Air Force base.

With fuel running low, the crew decided to divert. An emergency was declared and descent clearance obtained.

"We, uh, I don't have any problems," radioed the C-130. "We suspect we lost a gear door."

". . . understand you think you lost a gear door?"

"Yeah, we've confirmed we lost a gear door and, uh, we're declaring an emergency at this time."

Tower activated the crash phone approximately eight minutes prior to touchdown and the crew configured the aircraft for landing. As the aircraft approached short final the SOF noticed what appeared to be parts of tires hanging down but there was not enough time to notify the crew.

The approach was normal and the touchdown looked good, according to witnesses. But approximately 2,000 feet down the runway, smoke began billowing from the right gear well.

The aircraft commander brought the bird to a stop on the runway where the loadmasters evacuated the 40-plus passengers. Outside, the crew found a minus 45 degree chill factor and three flat tires.

Damage to the aircraft placed it in the minor accident category. But the mishap came close to being a major disaster.

Questions and Answers

A major factor in this accident was that the crew elected to shoot an approach to an airfield that was below minimums. Once the decision had been made to continue the approach, other factors also played a part.

Some of the approach lights and all of the overrun were blanketed with snow. After the flight examiner spotted the approach lights and notified the crew, apparently no one monitored the glide path information.

There are many questions which come to mind while reviewing this accident report.

Why didn't the PAR controller at destination advise the crew when the aircraft was below glide slope?

And why didn't the AC break off the approach when the field was called below minimums?

Why wasn't the snow removed from the overrun?

Why didn't the destination airfield issue a NOTAM concerning impaired lighting due to snow cover?

Committed To Land

How many times have we forced a landing out of a bum approach? "We're high! But we can make it." Or dipped below lousy weather. "Just another fifty feet." Odds are that we've all been on a crew that has experienced something like this. But we taxied in, walked away, and slapped ourselves on the back for our achievement.

One of the first rules most pilots are taught is never to attempt a landing when the weather is reported below minimums. Yet accident files are bulging with reports that would never have existed had that rule been followed.

Many aircrewmembers who are reading the account of this accident may one day be faced with a similar situation. Some call it "decision-making time."

Flying can be a tough game, even when all of an aircraft commander's decisions are good ones. Rarely is a fatal crash the fault of any single crewmember. He can count on plenty of help, often from agencies over which he has little or no control. Remember that the next time you find yourself in a race against the weather.

THE MAC F

ROLL O

AS OF 31 DECE M

750,000
436 MAW

600,000
76 MAS

400,000
14 MAS
41 MAS
75 MAS

350,000
6 MAS
7 MAS

300,000
3 MAS
4 MAS
30 MAS

250,000
86 MAS
99 MAS

200,000
57 MAS
98 MAS

150,000
446 MAW (Assoc)

100,000
9 MAS
22 MAS
53 MAS
54 WRS
55 WRS
375 AAW

TLYER

F HONOR

MBER 1976

25 YEARS OR MORE

98 MAS

99 MAS

20 THROUGH 24 YEARS

14 MAS
76 MAS
170 TAG (ANG)
172 TAG (ANG)
913 TAG (AFRES)
924 TAG (AFRES)
934 TAG (AFRES)

10 THROUGH 19 YEARS

3 MAS
6 MAS
7 MAS
22 MAS
30 MAS
Det 1, 39 ARRW
Det 11, 39 ARRW
Det 15, 39 ARRW
Det 18, 39 ARRW
41 ARRS
41 MAS
Det 5, 41 RWRW
53 MAS
53 WRS
54 WRS
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55 ARRS
57 MAS
67 ARRS
73 AAS (Assoc)
75 MAS
97 MAS (Assoc)
130 TAG (ANG)
137 TAW (ANG)
145 TAG (ANG)
166 TAG (ANG)
167 TAG (ANG)
312 MAS (Assoc)
403 RWRW (AFRES)
436 MAW
440 TAW (AFRES)
459 TAW (AFRES)
728 MAS (Assoc)
914 TAG (AFRES)
927 TAG (AFRES)
928 TAG (AFRES)
932 AAG (Assoc)
940 TAG (AFRES)

Global Notes

Professional Performance

Capt Gary C. Ahrenholz, 50 TAS, Little Rock AFB, Arkansas, has been presented the MAC Distinguished Individual Safety Award for his actions during a C-130 in-flight emergency. When severe elevator oscillations caused abrupt changes in aircraft attitude, Captain Ahrenholz turned off the autopilot and took manual control, pulled the associated circuit breakers, and isolated the utility and booster systems individually. The aircraft continued to buffet and slowly lose altitude as Captain Ahrenholz went through the isolation procedures which enabled him to determine that the aircraft had a failing elevator boost pack. ARTCC was notified of the emergency and the loss of altitude. There were short periods when the elevator appeared to bind and the yoke became difficult to move. Emergency trim was used to keep the aircraft as stable as possible; however, the oscillations continued to increase in severity. Aware of deteriorating weather conditions along the proposed route of flight, Captain Ahrenholz elected to divert. Then, at approximately 14,000 feet, the spurious control inputs ceased. Although control returned prior to landing, Captain Ahrenholz's actions and his decision to divert may have prevented a serious mishap.

A Flight To Remember

When Lt Col Robert W. Hansen, assistant director of safety for 21st Air Force at McGuire AFB, retired in April he could look back on a long, productive, and satisfying career. And also on a flight which was certainly one of the most memorable events of his many years of service. Colonel Hansen's last official flight for the Air Force was a C-141 mission to Europe; what made the trip so remarkable was the fact that he was accompanied by his two sons, Richard and Roger—both of whom are MAC pilots. And as an added highlight, Colonel Hansen completed 10,000 safe flying hours during the mission, qualifying him for the MAC Individual Flying-Hour Milestone Award.

Both flying and safety are long-time concerns of Colonel Hansen. He served a tour with the Army Air Corps in World War II and was recalled to active duty in 1951. He was first assigned to MATS in 1953 and, except for a 13-month tour at Osan, has been in MATS and MAC ever since. His flying hours have been accumulated in the C-97, C-118, T-29, C-131, C-54, and C-141.

A safety officer since 1960, Colonel Hansen believes that the essence of flying safety has changed little over the years. "Don't stick your neck out," he advises. "It doesn't pay to overextend yourself or your aircraft. Recognize the limitations of both, and make your decisions accordingly."

From Colonel Hansen's record, it's obvious that he has been following his own advice.

Richard, 63 MAW, Norton AFB, Colonel Hansen, and Roger, 436 MAW, Dover AFB.

15,000 Hours

CMSgt David W. Auger, a flight engineer with the 57 MAS, Altus AFB, Oklahoma, recently achieved 15,000 accident-free flying hours. He was presented with 15,000-hour patches, which will indentify him as a leader in flying safety.

Congratulations, Sergeant Auger, for this outstanding achievement.

Editorial Change

THE MAC FLYER's August masthead will feature a new supervising editor: Lt Col Orlen L. Brownfield, who has been on the staff as associate editor since May 1975. He replaces Lt Col John W. Ray, who is leaving the magazine to attend the Air War College at Maxwell AFB. Colonel Ray has been supervising editor since his arrival in 1973.

Looking for a way to get ahead in your career? There's a right way, and then there's a game that any number can play.

Mack C. Dent's

Briefcase-Timeclock Philosophy

by Lt Col John W. Ray
Supervising Editor

"You young aviators amaze me," sighed Mack C. Dent as he looped an arm around the young captain, "and you wonder why you can't get rated top block."

The captain gave Mack a quizzical look. "If it's because I'm drinking a beer," he responded, quickly plopping his glass on the bar, "I never have more than one or two."

Mack guffawed and shook his head between peals of laughter.

"You missed the point altogether. My subtlety missed its mark. Went completely over your

head," chortled Mack, wiping tears of mirth from his eyes. "I'm talking about the clock and the briefcase."

"Briefcase? What briefcase? What clock? I just got down from flying a local. I don't have a clock or a briefcase."

"That's just the point," interjected Mack, sensing his opening. "I saw you walk out of the office early this afternoon and you didn't have a briefcase with you. How do you think that looks to your boss, leaving before quitting time and with no briefcase?"

The captain was puzzled.

"Uh, I don't understand what you mean, but my boss never said I had to have a briefcase—or a clock—in the office."

Mack explained, "Not only should you keep a briefcase in your office, you should always be seen leaving the office with case in hand—well after quitting time—if you want to get ahead.

"It's not that you need a briefcase," he emphasized. "It's that your boss should see you carrying one home—if you know what I mean."

The captain was beginning to understand what Mack meant. "You mean, after I get off work—or go fly—I'm supposed to haul out an empty briefcase to impress my boss?" He wondered how walking out of the building—with or without a briefcase—after everyone else had left could possibly impress anyone.

"Now you're catching on," chuckled Mack. "But the briefcase doesn't have to be empty. You could always carry your lunch to work in it and bring home any leftovers."

"But a lot of the guys I know have to take work home with them in their briefcases. You make it seem like they're just putting on a show. I'd sure feel stupid if they thought I was taking home an empty case—or one with a stale sandwich in it."

Mack C. Dent pondered for a moment.

"That's the sacrifice you'll just have to make for your career," explained the self-appointed mentor. "And I have a few tricks that might help you."

"I'll bet," bemoaned the captain.

"Learn to pick your opportunities. For example, during the day, select a project that you've completed. Then, at quitting time—if you *must* leave at quitting time—tell your boss you're going to take the work home with you. When you report back the next morning, tell him you've completed the project. A few times like this, and you're in like Flynn."

"But that would be almost like lying," protested the captain.

"Not really," rationalized Mack. "You told him you were going to take work home, and that's what you did. You brought it back the next morning and presented it as a finished product—which it was. It's not your fault that he thought you worked on it all night."

Mack smiled proudly. "I like to call this little ploy 'career management.'"

The captain made a quick comparison between Mack's rank and time in grade and determined that his rank was a pretty good indication of the abject failure of his "briefcase-timeclock philosophy."

"I find it hard to believe that deceiving my boss can get me promoted," he protested.

Mack was on the verge of giving up on this adamant young know-it-all. But not quite.

"I would venture to guess," he pressed, "that on flying days you even take time off from the office to prepare for the flight, and no doubt you let your boss know you take off early."

Thoughtful and silent, he considered Mack's remark. Finally, "You're right about that. There's a little thing called predeparture crew rest. I'll admit to taking that."

"Ah, ha." Mack C. Dent was encouraged by this admission. Perhaps he could convince the youngster after all. "That's no way to hack the program. When I was flying, there was no such thing as predeparture crew rest. We just did our thing—like real pilots."

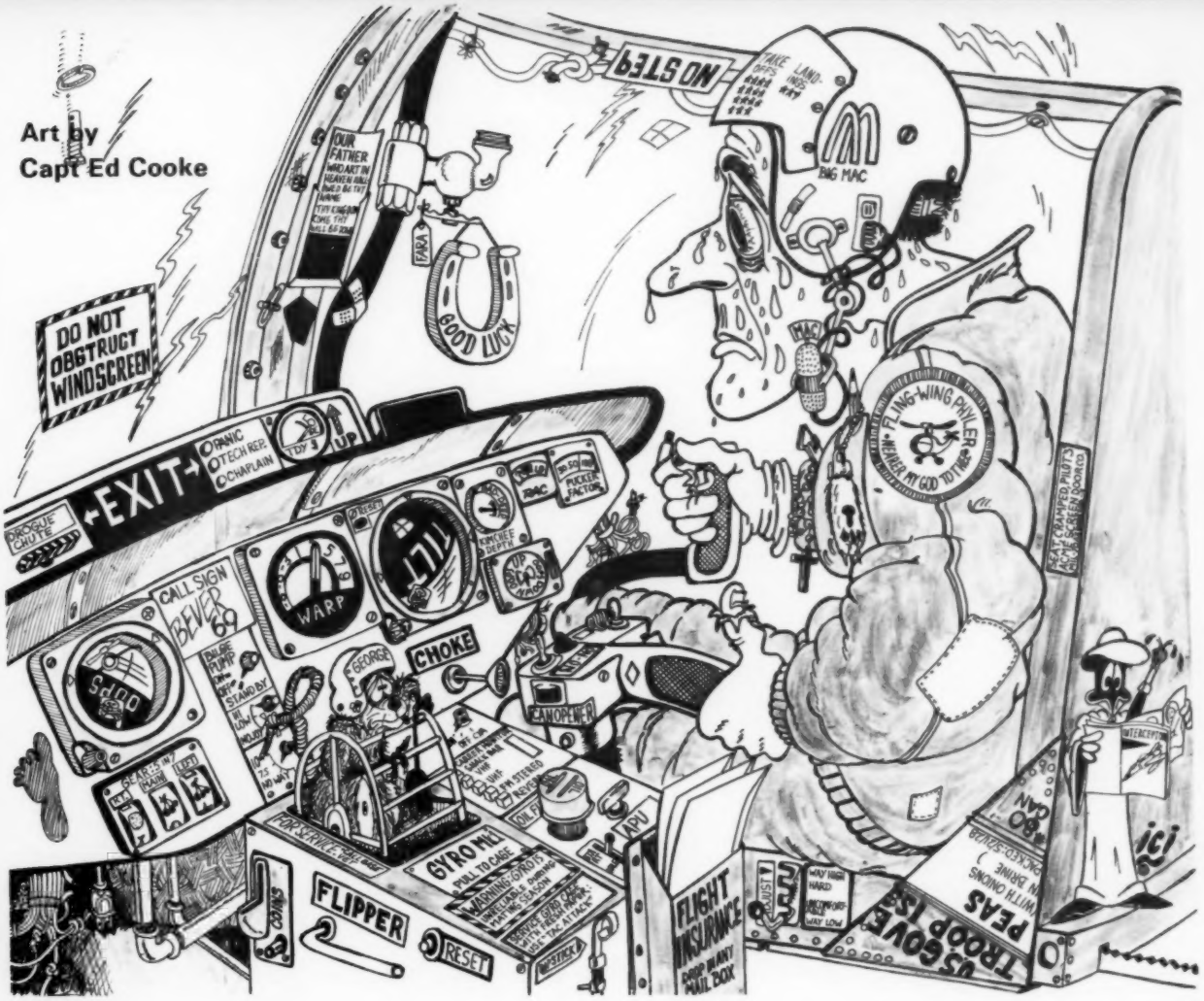
"Bet you guys had a terrible flying record," the captain chuckled, "even if you did take your briefcase home."

"We won't go into that," frowned Mack. "But our efforts were rewarded. We might've dinged a few planes, but we got the job done. By the way, when is the last time you got top block rating? Or did you, ever?"

The captain blushed. "Well, I did last time."

A huffy Mack C. Dent nearly choked on his olive as he quickly scarfed down what was left of his martini and turned hurriedly to leave.

"Humph! No doubt MAC is inflating the new rating system already," he mumbled, stumbling over his beat-up briefcase as he hurriedly made his way out of the club.



Helicopter Pilots Are Different

"The thing is, helicopters are different from planes. An airplane by its nature wants to fly, and if not interfered with too strongly by unusual events or by a deliberately incompetent pilot, it will fly. A helicopter does not want to fly. It is maintained in the air by a variety of forces and controls working in opposition to each other, and if there is any disturbance in this delicate balance the helicopter stops flying, immediately and disastrously.

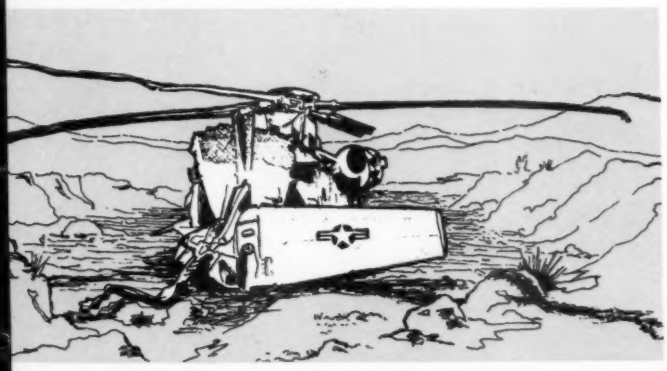
"There is no such thing as a gliding helicopter.

"This is why being a helicopter pilot is so different from being an airplane pilot, and why, in general, airplane pilots are open, clear-eyed, bouyant extroverts, and helicopter pilots are brooders, introspective anticipators of trouble. They know if something bad has not happened, it is about to."

—Harry Reasoner

A Case of Survival

continued from page 10



here. One more spot and then he would head back to the makeshift camp. He forced his crouching frame slowly into an upright position. Wearily, he put out a hand against the bank of the dry steam bed to steady himself and looked around. To the south, the small arroyo opened up and spread out upon the desert floor. Little hope for finding water in that direction. To the north, it deepened and began a snaky twist up the small canyon. With a certain resignation, the man stepped off and began trudging up the dry bed toward a concave bank where he would once more dig for water. As he walked, he kept his eyes moving along the sides of the canyon, looking for green vegetation, a sign of water. If I don't find water, he thought to himself, maybe I'll find a lost gold mine. His eyes took in the desolation around him. Standard backdrop for all lost gold mines. If he had been in a better humor, he would have laughed. Instead, he let out a hollow grunt.

His face was covered with several days' growth of beard; his head was swathed, Arab fashion, in what might have been mistaken as a dirty rag, but was, in fact, his T-shirt. His Nomex flying suit was soiled and gritty with sand.

He moved slowly in a deliberate attempt to conserve energy, because the survival manual suggested movement that way in a desert climate and because he was just plain tired. The strain, shock and thirst of the past few days was producing a depth of fatigue that he had never known. Reaching the turn in the streambed, he searched for the lowest point on the outside of the dry bed. Dropping wearily to his knees, he began digging with a bleached animal bone.

He had gone down almost 18 inches when he detected the first traces of moist sand. With a sigh of gratefulness, he sank back and rested for a minute. Another foot, he thought, and I should be in water. He was right. With a combination of hands and bone, he scraped down a few more inches and then touched his moistened fingers to his dry lips as the first trickle of muddy water seeped into the bottom of the hole. He lowered himself to the edge of the hole until his face was only inches from the filling pool He inhaled, filling his parched senses with the wet, beautiful smell of water, savoring it as a man would savor the bouquet of a fine wine. Then he drank. Finally, his thirst in part satisfied, he fished a large white cloth from a pocket and soaked it and his T-shirt headgear carefully in the muddy pool. Then he wrapped them in a piece of plastic, the group's only container, and set off back to his camp. The others, he knew, would return and repeat the process.

Methodically, Pappy Blackburn retraced his steps around the side of the hill, past the rock outcropping, and then diagonally down, across the slope of the butte to the narrow valley the crew had chosen for their camp. Looking to his right, he imagined that he could see in the distance a residual fire from the wreckage of the H-53. But that was impossible. The fire had burned itself out and the wreckage was practically invisible. He stopped and stood silently for a moment. For a few seconds, he again relived the accident, the approach and hover, the totally unexpected brownout at the bottom, the complete obscuration of everything by the blowing sand and powder-fine dust kicked up by the rotor wash, and the grinding crunch as the tail rotor slid into a pile of rocks. But like a man pulling a burned hand out of hot water, he slammed the floodgate that had allowed his mind to be filled with the renewed agony, and stomped off down the hill.

He made his way back to camp, his body now completely drained of energy. Winn and Heitman were kneeling over Doering beneath the salvaged parachute canopy which they had erected as a sunshade. Heitman looked up at Pappy.

"He's in bad shape. Been completely delirious for a couple of hours now." Heitman spoke slowly, measuring his words carefully through parched lips.

Winn looked up. "Yeah," he said, the fatigue showing in his voice. "I thought I heard him say something about the cold three or four times. He was talking about snow. And then just a few minutes ago he scooped up a handful of sand and tried to eat it. We got most of it out of his mouth, but he needs water if he's going to make it."

Pappy nodded and produced the precious burden of water-soaked cloth and began to work with

Heitman on Captain Doering.

After they had done all they could for their aircraft commander, Pappy told them how to reach the water hole and Heitman and Taggert left to find it. With Winn watching the captain, Pappy slipped quietly out of the shelter and walked down the streambed to a point where the sides fell away and it opened out into the desert floor. It was quieter and cool now—almost bearable. Somewhere around him an insect was buzzing. He sat down and leaned against a rock.

They would be found in a few days. Of that he was confident. Pappy possessed the gut-level will to survive, and he was determined to retire, buy a farm and die of old age. That's why he had never taken unnecessary chances, why throughout his flying career he had been more careful than the next guy. He couldn't control the way a pilot flew an airplane, but there were plenty of things he could control. And these could spell the difference between life and death. He had heard the story of the aircraft commander who had told the nav to shut up about being below the minimum en route altitude—just before their aircraft struck the ground.

There were instances from his own experience, too. He remembered when his crew had been in North Vietnam on a pickup. On short final an engine was shot out, and the aircraft commander was hit. The flight engineer had his hands full returning fire with the mini-gun. Pappy had been manning the other gun up front and had looked over his shoulder in time to jump up and keep the excited young copilot from shutting down the wrong engine. A gut-level instinct for survival.

And that HC-130 over the Rocky Mountains at night. He had been riding up front during an emergency. The two pilots and the engineer had their heads inside taking care of the problem. The nav was distracted. It was *he* who had detected that they were 500 feet below their minimum vectoring altitude and descending rapidly. That's what it took. A guy had to want to stay alive and not take things for granted.

Pappy looked out at the desert, now bathed in the white radiant light of the full moon, and then glanced up at the brilliant display of stars against the velvet sky. From somewhere back in his mind a thought drifted through, "The heavens declare the Glory of God." A fragment of a poem he had read or heard somewhere. Overhead, far off to the east he saw contrails from a westbound jet. Commercial...probably going into Los Angeles, he mused. A womb of life in a frozen, alien world.

He felt a strange kinship with those distant airmen. He could almost see into this cockpit—the dim instruments, the hush of quiet conversation and jokes among the crew during the ease of en route flying, the aroma of tobacco and the taste of coffee. Then, the stubbing of that last cigarette, putting away the en route map, getting out the approach plate, and running the checklist. The voices are softer now but clearer, as the crew prepares for battle. Now comes the descent, and the fight starts: the fight against improper altitudes and wrong clearances, against people who don't care trying to kill you, against boredom and systems malfunctions, fatigue, and conflicting traffic, bad weather, and VFR conditions that breed crew complacency. But they'll battle them all and make it to fly another day.

He watched the sky long after the jet was gone, until the contrail provided the only memory that it had ever passed his way. Yes, they'll make it and we will too, he said to himself as he slowly raised his frame and started back to camp. After all, what you must have is the will to survive. Because in the end, successful flying is basically *a case of survival.*

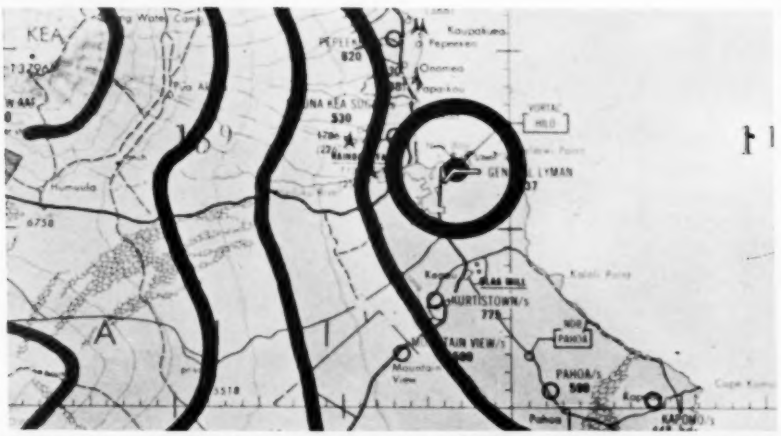
ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Captain Humphreys is from Charleston, West Virginia, and is a graduate of King College, Bristol, Tennessee. He completed OTS in 1970 and UPT-Helicopter in 1971. Captain Humphreys flew CH-53's in SEA and was then assigned to the 1550 ATTW at Hill AFB, Utah, as an instructor. In 1976, he attended fixed-wing conversion training at Webb AFB, Texas, and was assigned to the 9th Air Refueling Squadron at Beale AFB, California, flying KC-135Q's. Captain Humphreys is a former winner in the writing contest, finishing first in 1974 and as an honorable mention winner in 1976.

DÉJÀ VU

General Lyman Field

Hilo, Hawaii



General Lyman Field is two miles east of Hilo on the island's eastern edge. Contours highlight rapidly rising terrain.

General Lyman Field is on the "big island" of Hawaii, just two miles east of the city of Hilo on the island's eastern edge. A look at the scenery reveals a couple of volcanoes near the field with typically sharply rising terrain within five miles.

To comply with noise abatement procedures, aircraft should avoid overflying the city and beach areas.

There are two runways, 08/26 and 03/21. Runway 26 is the precision approach runway and measures 9,800 by 150 feet. Terrain beyond the field rises above 1,000 feet within five miles, 3,000 feet within ten miles, and 9,000 feet within 20 miles.

Runway 08 is a nonprecision runway and the threshold is displaced by 1,000 feet.

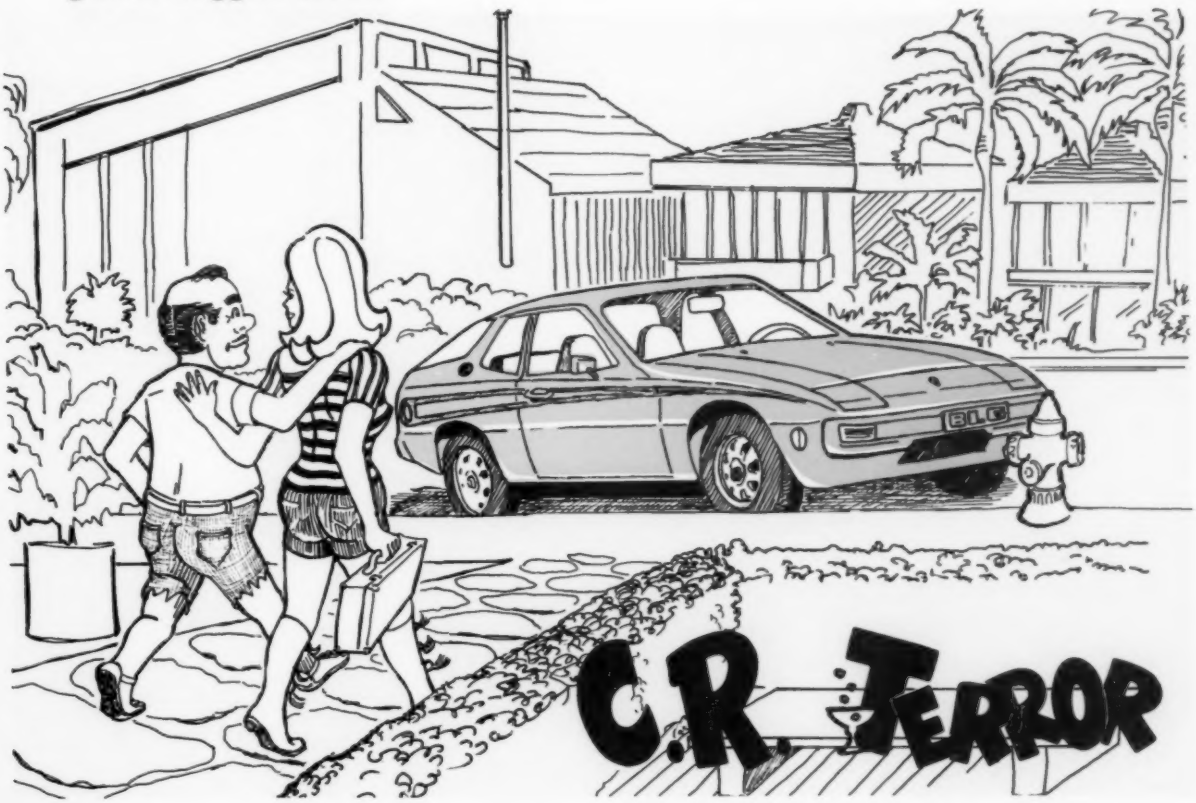
Runways 21/03 are also nonprecision runways, measuring 5,000 by 150 feet. Just to the left of aircraft departing 03 is a factory complex and a 200-foot-high water tower within a half mile of the runway.

For more information, ask for *ISD-Q6-356* at your Learning Center.

Runway 26 is the precision runway, shown here from an aircraft one mile from touchdown.

Runway 21, shown from four miles out, is a nonprecision runway, 5,000 feet long and 150 feet wide.

C.R.'s plans for a quick stop with Tassels at an island paradise get all bogged down.



C.R. TERROR

Tassels, m'lovely, this is your Cuddly Bear, C.R." the Enamoured Elf cooed into the receiver. "Three days' crew rest over the long weekend! Wait'll you hear what I've planned!"

Tassels smiled as C.R. began to lay the plans for what sounded like a weekend she'd long remember.

"I've contracted with a local flying club for the use of one of their mini-machines," the Light-headed, Light-plane Lover confided. "And I know just the place: an isolated beach I discovered while flying local the other day. Heh, heh, pack a picnic lunch and your teeniest bikini. Just the two of us—fun in the sun on a balmy Carolina beach. Pack your things—travel light and prepare for hours of sunbathing *au naturel—si vous desirez.*"

"C.R. Bear, it sounds absolutely delightful!" Tassels could barely contain herself.

Within minutes, Tassels Taylor could hear the roar of the Paunchus Pilot's borrowed Porsche 924 as he squealed to a stop in front of her apartment. Extricating himself from the Bavarian Racing Car, C.R. bounced to Tassels' doorstep, sartorially clad in an old faded T-shirt, cutoffs, and sandals.

"Come, love-of-my-life," the Rotund One sang through the screen door, "the weekend's a-wastin'."

Tassels appeared, carrying a small suitcase. "I'm ready to be carried away by my Foxy Flier. Did you pack anything?"

"Hee, hee. Just my Terrorific 'Tini kit." C.R. grinned. "For survival, you know."

The odd duo boarded the Deutsch Dream and smoked off in the general direction of the rising sun.

The sun was well into the eastern sky as the white Porsche pulled into Winterville airport.

"There she is, Tassels." C.R. pointed a stubby finger in the direction of one o'clock. "The sports car of the sky—and it's ours for the weekend!"

"It's awfully small, Buttercup." Tassels looked a little worried. "What is it?"

"A Citabria for the Lady." The Ambient Aeronaut continued, "Citabria is 'airbatic' spelled backwards. You'll get to see a real pilot perform!"

"Aaah-huh." Tassels forced a smile.

"Now you unload the goodies, and I'll get the key. Yawhoo!"

As the Bibulous Buffoon bounced toward the operations

shack, Tassels set about unloading the supplies: a picnic basket, a set of golf clubs, a small suitcase, C.R.'s Terrorific 'Tini kit, and a large beach blanket that C.R. had obviously stolen from a flight nurse whose name was stenciled in four-inch-high lettering.

In a matter of seconds, C.R. emerged from the shack waving a key. "An unlocking device, m'dear—our freedom! We'll soon be chasing the shouting winds along, flinging our eager craft through the footless halls of air, et cetera, et cetera."

Tassels looked skeptically at the small aircraft. She noticed that there was only one seat in the front, one in the back, and that the wee bird had no nose gear.

"Not to worry, m'little chickadee, you can ride up front if you like," the Adroit Aviator with Avoirdupois advised. "I'm back seat qualified, heh, heh. As for the missing nosewheel—we've got an extra on the tail. It takes a real pilot to handle one of these beauties on the ground."

Tassels pointed at the placard in the luggage area: "Maximum baggage 100 pounds, aerobatics prohibited."

"That's for the school children, sweetie," C.R. chortled. "With my mega-hours aerial experience, the rules don't apply!"

With Tassels in the front, C.R. reached over her shoulder and pulled the starter knob. The Continental O-200A roared.

The Forgetful Fumbler had the throttle nearly firewalled but the little beast refused to move. He reduced power to idle and opened the door. Sure enough, there was the tiedown fastened securely to the rear wheel.

As C.R. climbed into the cockpit for the second time, Tassels shouted over the roar of the mufflerless engine, "Anything wrong?"

"Uh, hmmm. Nothing at all, Sweetie."

"Aren't you supposed to do a checklist or something?"

"Let's see. Hmmm, we got gas. And the engine is running. Check complete." The words were just barely out of his mouth when the little bird leaped over the one chock C.R. had forgotten to remove and began zigzagging toward the runway.

Six hundred feet down the grass strip, the STOL Skipper yanked back on the stick and the Citabria leaped into the air, approximating 30 degrees nose up.

"Giddyap!" C.R. shouted. "The Rhinestone Flyboy has once again slipped the surly bonds!"

The Paunchus Pilot pushed the stick forward and leveled the little bird just above the treetops. "We'll cruise along at flight level zero one for awhile. Wouldn't want my lovely to get hypoxic."

"You still haven't told me where we're going, C.R." Tassels shouted to her GIB.

"We're taking a Terrorific Tour of the coastline. We'll start by overflying the airplane patch and then head for Cow's Island. We'll land there, do a little sunbathing and head on down to Hilton Foot for a weekend of fun and merriment."

The couple cut a wide swath en route to Charleytown: A disgruntled farmer lay face down in his newly plowed field, having dived from his tractor as the MAC fighter pilot did a mock strafing pass on him.

The power lines were still waving from the prop blast after C.R. had cleared them by inches on his crop-dusting demonstration.

A C-141 driver, on short final to the base, squinted his eyes in an attempt to get the tail number of the light aircraft that *under-*

flew him.

Maintaining meticulous control of the aircraft, the islet-bound pilot flew his "four hundred" profile: One hundred horsepower at 100 percent doing 100 knots at 100 feet.

Approaching a wide spot in the intercoastal waterway, C.R. spotted a sailboat beating to windward on a port tack. "Watch this, Tassels. We'll come in on his blind side and scare hell out of 'em!"

The unsuspecting skipper had the starboard gunwale in the water already; the would-be subchaser's prop blast finished the job, leaving in its wake two wet weekend-sailors.

Finally, the Nervous Navigator spotted his IP. "There it is, m'darlin'— Cow's Island. We're only minutes from sheer pleasure and ecstacy." The Aerobatic Aeronaut did a pop-up maneuver and attempted a victory roll at 500 feet.

Discounting the effects of an aft-CG due to his own bulk and the goodies packed in the baggage area, the Forgetful Fumbler pulled the stick full back and jammed in full left rudder. The Citabria shuddered through a snap roll and spun wildly toward the ground, 500 feet below.

"Do something!" Tassels screamed.

"Don't worry, Pigeon."

C.R. was suddenly perspiring. Unsure of the proper recovery procedures, he released the controls. The Champ stopped spinning but continued in a near vertical dive toward the beach. The G-meter registered "6" as C.R. attempted to bury the stick in his belly. The McCauley prop gnawed at the sea oats a few feet above the ground.

"Heh, heh," C.R. forced a laugh. "How's that for a little demonstration of precision flying?"

"I think I'd rather be on the ground." There was a certain amount of command in Tassels' voice.

"Just stand by one. That dry lake bed ahead is our own *private* airport."

C.R. slowed the little bird to 50 m.p.h. and executed a perfect three-point landing. The Addled Aviator was regaining some of his confidence. But as the aircraft began to slow down, placing more weight on the gear, the little tires began sinking into the soft sand. Two hundred feet later, the Citabria stopped, bucked her tail skyward, and settled back to the sand.

"What kind of maneuver was that!" Tassels shouted.

"Short field, m'dear, short field." The Pudgy Pilot shut down the engine and opened the door, noting that the tires were buried right up to the wheel pants.

"Well, let me out of here," Tassels said and indignantly deplaned.

As Tassels began to unload the beach supplies, the Round One walked round the aircraft. Hmmm, no damage, he thought. "I wonder how I'm gonna get this thing out of here," he said aloud.

"What's that?" Tassels asked.

"I said, 'It's a wonderful thing, us being here.' " C.R. cleared his throat. "It must be Terror-tini time." With that he joined Tassels on the beach blanket, mixed a couple of drinks and lay back to enjoy the sun.

But even with two Terrorific 'Tinis, C.R. couldn't blunt the impact of the problem that faced him. "You just lie here and soak up them rays. I'll hop in the bird and do a little taxi recon around the island."

The Wobbly Weatherman licked his finger and stuck it in the air. "Let's see, wind three two zero at four knots, I'd estimate." With that he walked to the aircraft, picked up the tail and swung it around downwind. He hopped into the craft, hit the master switch, and pulled the starter. With the engine running, he pushed the throttle full forward, not realizing that Tassels was sunbathing in his six o'clock.

He left the power maxed for a full minute, but the wee bird moved only about 20 feet. Disgustedly, he shut down the engine and dismounted to find a disgusted, windblown, sand-spattered Tassels. The beach blanket had blown away, and sand and grit covered everything.

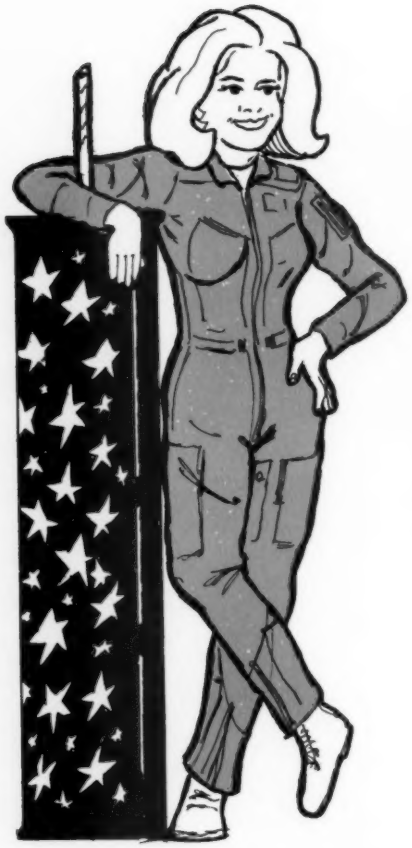
"Some weekend," she muttered. "Take me home immediately!"

"Uh, I'd like to, Pet, but I've got a small problem . . . ."

"Hey, Blinky," Sam shouted. "I understand the boss is back from his gala weekend with Tassels. Did you get to talk to him?"

"Hi, Sam," Blinky responded. "Yeah, but I don't know how 'gala' it was. He had a terrible sunburn and didn't want to talk much about it. Said something about a hundred and forty bucks for uncancelled reservations at Hilton Foot, three hundred for 'aircraft retrieval,' whatever that is, a civil suit filed by a farmer from Monk's Corner, and a fuzzy-faced Coast Guard helicopter pilot putting the 'hustle' on Tassels. I'm not sure I understand, but maybe I'm not supposed to."

"Yeah," Sam shrugged. "As far as Major Terror is concerned, I'm not sure that anybody understands."



Quick Stoppers

Dangerous DZ

As the C-130 turned inbound to the drop zone for a personnel drop, a helicopter pilot contacted the Combat Control Team for clearance to overfly the DZ. The controller instructed him to cross and to report clear; the helicopter pilot acknowledged. The chopper began to cross the north end of the DZ, but then returned to the northwest corner and landed. Repeated attempts by the CCT to contact the pilot were unsuccessful.

Meanwhile, the C-130 had reported one minute out and received clearance to drop. As the aircraft crossed the leading edge of the DZ, the pilot spotted the helicopter, its rotors still turning. He called "no drop," possibly preventing a serious mishap. No thanks to the helicopter pilot who departed the DZ shortly thereafter without even contacting CCT.

Lack of Laddership

It had been a long night shift for the crew chief. As was his habit, he had stowed his four-foot stepladder in the wheel well of the multiengine jet; but on this particular morning, he forgot to remove it on preflight. The flight engineer, working with a flashlight in the predawn darkness, failed to see the ladder; so did the aircraft commander when he made his walkaround. The ladder finally got its share of attention when it fell from the wheel well during gear retraction. No damage, no injuries—just an old lesson relearned.

Got a Cold?

If you're ever tempted to fly even though you have "just a little cold," consider the experience of a pilot from another command. He'd been flying practice approaches for about an hour and a half when he began to feel flushed and dizzy. He declared an emergency, landed, and was met by a flight surgeon who diagnosed the problem as sinusitis. The pilot had apparently taken off with a sinus problem; the symptoms eventually became severe enough to impair his reactions.

Slippin' and Slidin'

The runway was reported wet as the T-39 turned final, so the AC was using minimum run landing procedures. He noticed some hydroplaning on initial brake application, but with 4,500 feet of runway remaining and 70 knots of airspeed, he felt that deceleration was adequate.

By the time the Sabreliner got to the 2,500-feet-remaining mark, airspeed was down to about 40 knots; the AC shut down the left engine to help slow down. But in another 500 feet the Teenie Weenie began weathervaning to the left and drifting to the right. It slid sideways off the side of the runway and stopped; there were no injuries and only minor damage.

Investigators blamed the excursion into the boonies on the heavy rubber deposits at the departure end of the runway. Even when dry, rubber deposits are slippery; in the rain, they can be treacherous. A few airfields with rubber buildups provide warnings to that effect in the IFR Supplement. Many others, with equally hazardous buildups, may not. So be ready for the worst!

Ruptured Duct

The Starlifter had just begun a simulated three-engine go-around when the crew heard a muffled "blowout" noise. The sound was followed by the illumination of the left-bleed-duct-overheat, fire-bottle-one, and fire - bottle - two annunciator lights. As the crew accomplished emergency procedures for the overheat, the scanner noticed a four-foot strip of metal hanging from the top of the number one pylon. The crew declared an emergency and made an uneventful landing.

The cause of all the commotion was a bleed duct which had ruptured as the power was advanced to go-around EPR. Hot air entering the wing leading edge triggered the overheat warning; the fire bottle annunciator lights illuminated when the deformed duct severed wires to the fire extinguishing system, leaving the Starlifter with no fire protection for the number one and two engines.

Qs

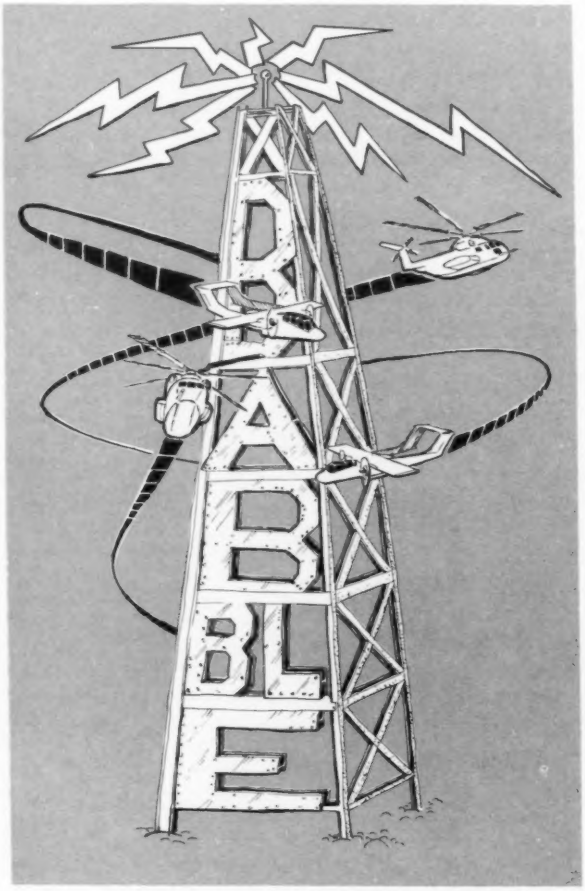
Saved on Guard

Green "down - and - locked" lights for the main landing gear are normally a comforting sight for a Sabreliner crew—except after gear retraction with the red light out in the handle and the nose gear indicating up. One T-39 crew, faced with this unusual situation, initiated the emergency gear lowering checklist, got safe indications for all three gear, and headed back home.

The approach seemed routine until the flare, when the pilot of a T-38 awaiting departure broke in on guard frequency with the startling news that the T-39's main gear were up! A quick go-around was followed by a repeat of the emergency gear-lowering exercise and a fly-by to confirm gear position; this time the landing was uneventful.

The original gear problem had been caused by out-of-adjustment downlock microswitches. The near-gear-up landing resulted from the crew's inadvertent omission of a step on the emergency checklist: the one which calls for pulling the T-handle to extend the gear.

Quick thinking by the T-38 pilot prevented an "abrasive" touchdown.



Tower of Babble

CB'ers aren't the only ones who have problems with congested frequencies. During a SAR exercise, two HH-53's found themselves sharing a UHF channel with two OV-10's and the simulated survivor—not an unusual situation, but this time the chatter turned out to be more than just a nuisance. As one of the Jolly Greens hovered over a forested area for the pickup, the aircraft commander inadvertently decreased the hover altitude. The copilot's warning on interphone was blocked by radio transmissions; the altitude continued to decrease until the blade tips chewed up a tree (and vice versa). Reestablishing a stable hover, the AC completed the pickup and landed at the nearest suitable site. The nuisance value of the radio chatter turned out to be $115,000 for six new rotor blades.

after deadline . . .

A SPECIAL FLIP ENROUTE LOW ALTITUDE chart is now being tested. U. S. charts L-3 and L-4 have been reproduced with special shaded relief areas; they also numerically depict the highest known feature in each quadrangle. The new test chart looks about the same as the old one, but an aircrewmember will be able to tell at a glance the type of terrain and height of obstacles beneath him. The test is being conducted by FAA and involves all major air commands. Results should be coming soon.

HE WON! Major Ed Marsey, 89 MAW Chief of Safety, has won the coveted Air Force Chief of Staff Individual Safety Award. Look for a "Global Note" next month. Congratulations, Ed!

WEAR A COTTON T-SHIRT under that Nomex if you are flying, advises the Life Support System Program Office at Wright-Patterson AFB. And don't wear those neat nylon drawers--they have an extremely low melting point and in some cases negate the protection provided by your Nomex flying suit.

HATR--HATR--HATR. A C-141 was forced to go around when a civil aircraft cut in front of it for landing. The pilot submitted a local OHR at base ops and turned in a copy at home base. By the time the report got through all the channels, it was too late to take any meaningful action. Moral: HATR. The Hazardous Air Traffic Report is the quickest and most effective means of getting the right people's attention in cases involving traffic hazards.

RED LIGHT. In a May After Deadline we reported plans to realign MAC's C-141 airdrop force. Those plans have been scuttled and, as before, Norton and Charleston will provide the primary C-141 airdrop force.

WE NEED YOUR HELP! Next month we'll be conducting a readership survey. Make a special effort to get an August copy, fill out the survey, and get it back to us. Here's your chance to tell us what you think of THE MAC FLYER.

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